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ABSTRACT

This booklet is the fourth in a series of five published in connection with the Guam Assessment of Educational Needs. Collectively, the series represents an effort to identify and validate the most critical education needs for the Guam schools so that improved educational opportunities can be developed for Guam students. This document provides an overall summary of the identified critical needs and puts these needs into a context suitable for planning, execution, and evaluation. It defines and describes the development of a master plan and considers the relation between long-range planning and short-run goals and programs. The document concludes with a statement about the human aspects of the planning process. (Author/DN)

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RECOMMENDED ACTION

EMERGING FROM THE

GUAM NEEDS ASSESSMENT STUDY

Submitted to the

GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

by

Worldwide Education and Research Institute
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Salt Lake City, Utah

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Planning philosophy presupposes that man must influence his future to some degree by present actions to survive. It considers this effort ethically desirable. It implies that human knowledge and rationality are cumulative, and presumes the existence of goals sufficiently definite for planning. Reciprocally, scientific investigation of theory and practice shapes planning philosophy by contributing new and more reliable knowledge to substantiate or modify intuitive beliefs and subjective reasoning.

--M.S. Branch*

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*Melville C. Branch, Planning Aspects and Applications, p. 309.

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FOREWORD

This booklet is one in a series of five bookelts published as a direct outgrowth of the Guam Assessment of Educational Needs. It attempts to provide an overall summary of the identified critical needs and to put these needs in a context suitable for planning, execution, and evaluation.

Preliminary Identification of Factual Data. Staff members of the Worldwide Education and Research Institute reviewed previous studies and statistical information pertaining to educational policies and procedures on Guam in order to provide some of the preliminary factual data for the assessment of educational needs. Staff members also collected a large number of opinionnaires from various groups in Guam. These opinionnaires constituted an overall attempt to sample opinions about the critical needs of education in Guam as far as the general public, the pupils, the teachers, and the school administrators were concerned. The findings of these opinion studies, along with other factual information collected by Worldwide, served as a basis for the work of six committees appointed by the Guam Department of Education.

Committee Deliberations on Documented Concerns. Under the direction of the Guam Department of Education, a plan was made to hold a Needs Assessment Conference at John F. Kennedy High School during the month of December, 1972. Each Committee was composed of a representative group of interested persons residing in Guam. At the Conference, the needs assessment committees considered a wide variety of educational concerns and related facts. Through a process of discussion and

compromise, the critical needs of the Guam Schools were identified by the combined committees.

Suggested Criteria for Evaluating the Guam Needs Assessment Efforts. To properly evaluate the total needs assessment efforts for the Guam School District, it is necessary to identify suitable criteria or standards. In previous efforts to assess critical needs in other districts, such criteria have been developed. The following nine standards are presented to aid the reader in making his independent evaluation. The comments shown in parentheses provide clues as to how well the standards have been met in the assessment efforts on Guam.

1. The identified needs should be relevant and their resolution should be reasonable feasible. (Specific recommendations concerning valid needs, criticality, and allowable time were provided by the Needs Assessment Committees.)

2. The needs assessment efforts should actively involve a large number of people and provide opportunities for them to gain new insights and to change their perceptions regarding the real needs of education. (Opinionnaire results were gathered from a large sample plus the fact that some 45 persons participated in the Needs Assessment Conference.)

3. The opinion surveys should sample important segments of the population in practically every sector of the district, and should consider all types of educational concerns. (The opinionnaires were distributed randomly to parents, non-parents, teachers, school administrators, 9th graders, 12th graders, and key leaders.)

4. There should be a desire on the part of the Needs Assessment Committee members to consider each of the more serious educational concerns identified by the data from the opinion surveys in the light of perceived learner needs. (The committee members, for the most part, eliminated those concerns which did not focus on learner needs. The few concerns of this type that they retained, they kept because they believed those particular "solutions" were germaive to the eventual resolution of the learner needs.)

5. Deliberations of the committee members should penetrate to the basic levels of educational needs and go deeply into the roots of possible institutional change. (Expressions of committee members indicated that most of them believed this objective was reached.)

6. The facts and objective information available for use by the committee members in their deliberations should be reasonably accurate, relevant, and extensive. (The sources of the facts were given by bibliographical reference and page number. Committee members also provided additional facts of their own. All of these facts were included in the booklet which includes the published concerns analyses.

7. The values expressed by the committee members should be made explicit and identified in such a way that their relationships to the perceived needs are both direct and apparent. (These values were included in a booklet which summarized the concerns analyses and were also included in a different format in the booklet which suggested a preliminary "operational" philosophy.)

8. Local schools within the district should be "ready" to give serious consideration to the results of the needs assessment effort and to assist in making appropriate plans to establish pilot and on-going programs to resolve the perceived needs validated by the committee deliberations. (Representatives of various local schools served on the needs assessment committees. Expressions of committee members were generally supportive of the needs analysis and hopeful that significant changes and improvements would result in their own schools.)

9. The total needs assessment effort should demonstrate convincingly that the assessment of critical needs in education is a continuous process because of the constantly changing perceptions of what is possible and desirable within the context of current social, economic, and political realities. (The needs and possible solutions identified by this study differed considerably from former needs assessment efforts.)

A Basis for Long-Range Planning. It is hoped that the contents of this booklet will help bring about some significant educational improvements in Guam. It can do this if it serves as the starting point for district-wide educational planning. More than just planning is required, however. There must be a follow-up effort to resolve the identified nneds. This goal will require the close coordination of planning efforts within the district and a liaison with the long-range planning

efforts of other governmental agencies in Guam. It is to this end that this booklet has been produced.

--Jefferson N. Eastmond

WERI President

I. CRITICALITY OF THE VALIDATED NEEDS

> Strategic planning is the process of deciding on objectives of the organization, on changes in these objectives, on the resources used to attain these objectives, and on the policies that are to govern the acquisition, use, and disposition of these resources.
>
> --Robert N. Anthony

The six needs assessment committees conducted an analysis of the educational concerns which had been identified from preliminary investigations and opinionnaire data as being "critical" or "important" for the schools of Guam. The detailed work sheets of the committees have been included in one of the four accompanying booklets in the Guam Needs Assessment series. This chapter of this booklet presents a summary of the validated learner needs identified by the six combined committees. Subsequent chapters of this booklet attempt to outline "next steps" that can and should be taken to resolve these needs.

Figure 1 attempts to portray the identified learner needs validated by the committees in a context of criticality and maximum allowable time permitted to resolve the need. The validated needs are shown by title in the rectangles. The arrows drawn toward the right hand side of each rectangle shows the time allowed to resolve the need. The judgement regarding criticality is shown along the arrow. More details on the full definition of each need and suggested criteria for need resolution have been presented in other booklets of the Guam Needs Assessment series.

The validated needs shown in Figure 1 have been ranked roughly in terms of placement. Those needs classified as "extremely critical" are shown toward the top of the list. Those needs judged as "critical" are placed lower; and those needs assessed as "important" are placed lowest on the list. No ranking or priority has been made within the categories of "extremely critical," "critical," or "important."

Figure 1. Validated Learner Needs with Indicated Criticality and Target Dates for the Guam School District

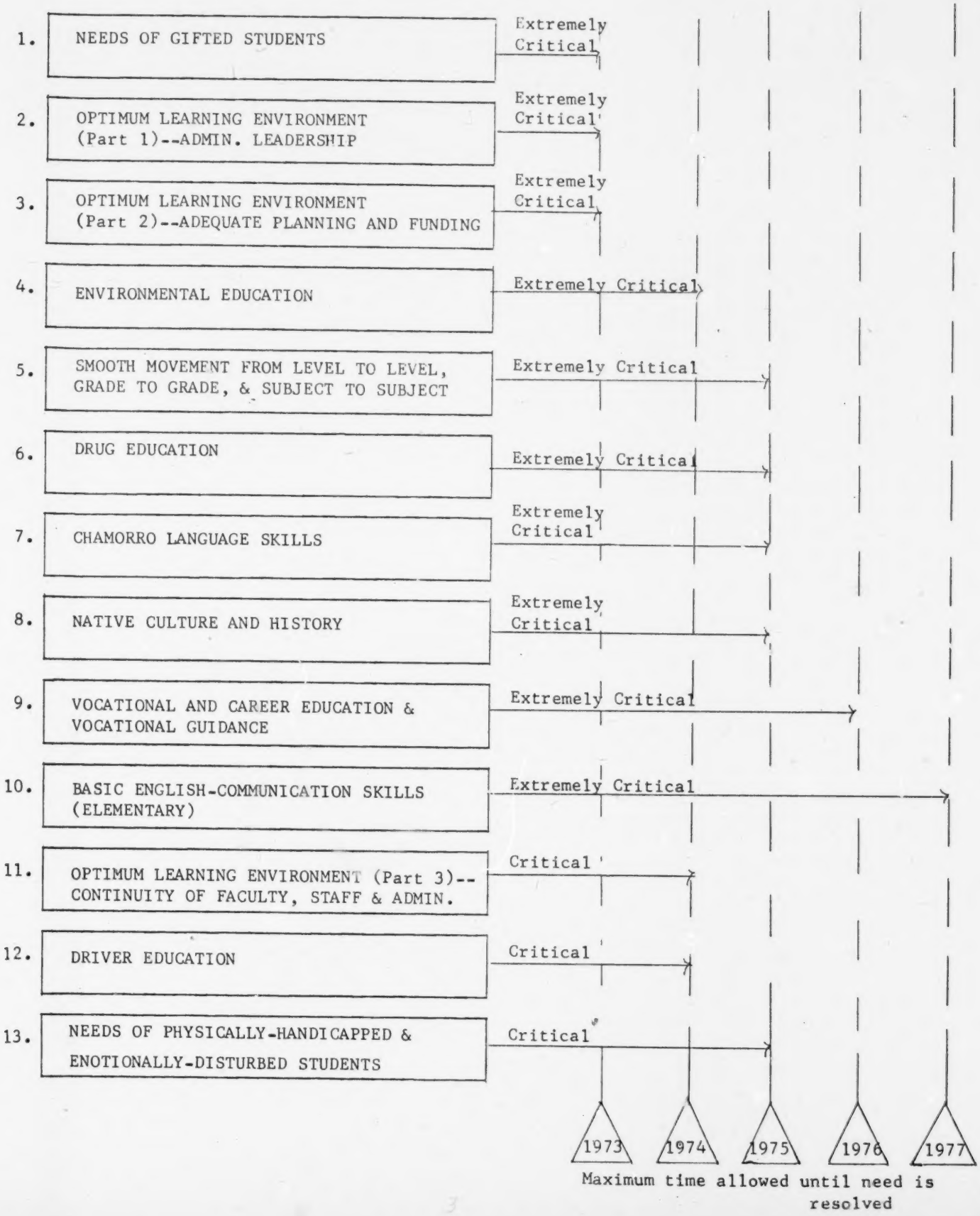
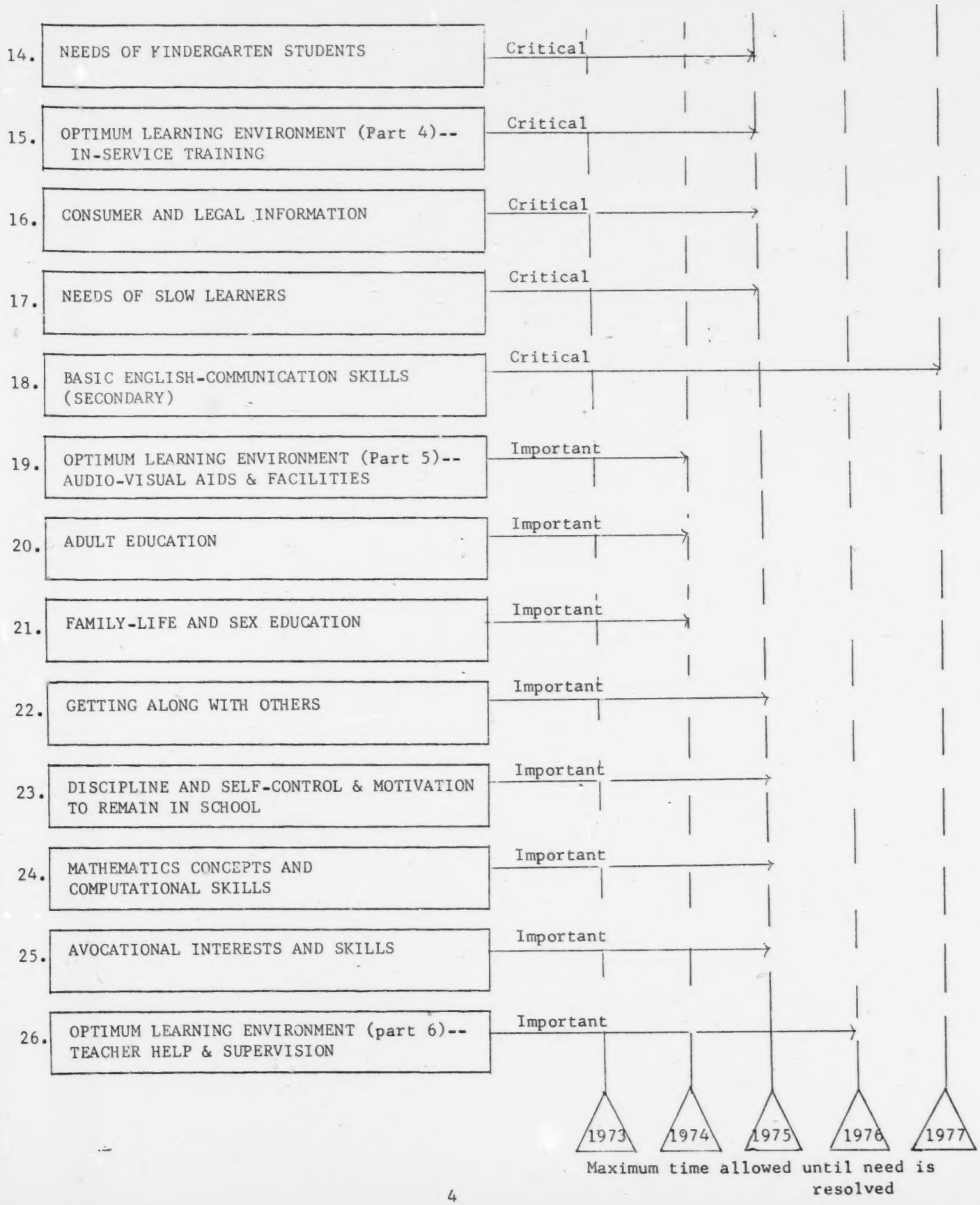


Figure 1. Validated Learner Needs with Indicated Criticality and Target Dates for the Guam School District Cont.



II. SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS

> Educational planning is neither an end in itself nor a formula for achieving the impossible. It is simply a method of getting more and better educational results from the resources available, by using the tools of rational analysis and scientific research rather than by 'flying blind.'
>
> --Phillip Coombs
> International Institute of
> Educational Planning

Now that the critical educational needs have been identified and defined, it is necessary to develop plans for resolving these needs. Each separate plan to resolve a need should then be integrated into an overall design or a master plan. When such a plan involves many agencies, districts, and institutions, it is referred to as comprehensive. When it projects activities for several years into the future, it is termed "long-range."

The obvious next step is for the educational leaders of the Guam School District to spearhead the development of a long-range, comprehensive master plan for the schools. Such a master plan for educational development has at least four important dimensions. Applied to Guam, the master plan should have the following characteristics with respect to the four dimensions:

> Vertical. The master plan should be based on conditions that currently exist and on those that can be realistically forecast for the future. It should also be consistent with various legal enactments and be in harmony with current social, economic, and political developments.

Horizontal. The master plan should provide for maximum involvement of community leaders and organizations. It should also be based upon the finest available professional skill and upon scientific knowledge and information. In this way, the master plan furnishes a long-range, dynamic program of improvement designed to resolve educational problems of a district-wide nature with a cooperative type of collective wisdom which reflects the best thoughts and aspirations of the total community.

In-Depth. The master plan should be of such a nature that it can improve the allocation of resources in deliberate attempts to enhance district-wide development and to resolve critical educational needs. In addition, the plan should be developed in a way that does not seriously upset school-district personnel and that causes only a minimum of interruption in the regular activities of the schools and community organizations.

Time. The master plan must provide concrete answers and give specific directions for the solutions of the most critical and immediate problems faced by the schools and communities of the district. Moreover, it must provide an opportunity for the citizenry to influence in a positive way the future development of the school-community and thus control their own destiny. It should provide for a long-term, on-going effort that fixes the responsibility for a continuing, broad community involvement. It must also attempt to harmonize the solution of immediate- and intermediate-range problems with those significant plans of a long-range character.

Master plan development typically begins with what is usually called a "needs assessment," which is the procedure commonly used for the identification of priority problems. It is a continuing process, but the contents of this booklet and the others in this series of five needs assessment booklets are adequate for encouraging the necessary first steps for Guam School District's long-range planning for educational development.

III. A FRAMEWORK FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

"Planning is one approach to the matching of means and ends."

--Wroe Anderson

It is generally conceded by most successful organizations and institutions that long-range planning must be an integral part of the total operation. There is an increasing trend not only to recognize that such planning has a place, but to give it greater priority in decision-making and policy-making activities.

The term, "long-range planning," has several possible meanings. To some people it means thinking through the probably long-term results of decisions that are made currently. To others it means the development of a far-reaching program for the entire organization. Still to others it means making long-range projections and then anticipating the adjustments which have to be made in the current program to anticipate and facilitate these developments. Hopefully, all of these persons would agree that basically long-range planning is the deliberate determination of various courses of action which might be taken to accomplish specified purposes. If this definition is accepted, long-range planning becomes a process of determining the objectives and goals of the institution or organization, and the deciding on the changes required and the policies necessary to regulate the acquisition, utilization, and deployment of the necessary resources.

In practice, an initial decision to establish a master plan for the district must quickly be followed by a series of decisions which set

the parameters for the planning under consideration. That is, decisions must be made regarding the objectives, scope or limitations, schedule of activities, and probable costs. Goals must be set, strategies developed for achieving them, strategies translated into detailed programs of operation, and finally some means provided for insuring that the plans are successfully carried out.

No matter how one views planning, it soon becomes evident that a clearcut statement of objectives together with an underlying philosophy of education provides the required framework. It is the philosophy of education which helps to determine "what ought to be" from an array of possible alternatives. In education, the extent and effectiveness of the plans being made will depend in large measure on the awareness, interest, and desires of those persons who are to be most directly affected. The objectives of educational planning must therefore represent directly or indirectly the philosophy of the local teachers, school administrators, students, parents, and other citizens of the community.

Admittedly, then, educational objectives must be embedded in a philosophy. However, they must also be defined in terms of their long-range and short-range implications. If long-range objectives are considered the ends, then the short-range objectives are to be seen as the means. Obviously, the short-range objectives must correlate with those of longer range.

Similarly, just as there are long-range and short-range objectives, so also must there be long-range and short-range plans for reaching these objectives.

And in the same manner, if maximum benefits are to be derived, the short-range plans must correlate with and support those of longer range.

It is the long-range plan, comprehensive in scope, but functionally related to the many short-range activities, that is called the master plan.

IV. MASTER PLAN DEVELOPMENT

> In critical times like the present the leader of a nation has to surround himself not only with practical specialists and experts but also with impractical theoreticians.
>
> The theoretician is to the contemporary leader what the soothsayer and the prophet were to leaders in ancient times; he offers a familiarity with the road ahead. And though the familiarity be illusory it is still a vital aid for it gives the leader the feeling that he knows whither he is going.
>
> Predictability is an essential component of a sense of power.
>
> --Eric Hoffer

A long-range master plan should be viewed as an instrument whereby the goals, values, and resources of the school district are translated into accomplishments. That is, within proper legal limitations, the master plan should reveal how human, material, and temporal resources are to be marshalled, deployed, given focus, and orchestrated to bring into development the priority goals determined by governing-board policies.

Essentially, the master plan should define the long-range objectives of the school district and should clearly enunciate the underlying educational philosophy. In addition, the master plan should provide the documentation for the efforts made to validate the need and to assure broad participation in the determination of both the goals and the philosophy, a procedure designed to make the master plan acceptable to most of the persons and groups who are directly involved or who are generally concerned. Within the master plan, priorities for action should be carefully specified in relation to those strategic and desirable activities which will, hopefully, move the district toward the resolution of the various educational needs.

A long-range, master plan, once developed, should serve many functions. Some of these functions will probably receive more emphasis and require more attention than others depending upon the type of master plan adopted. Some of these functions are as follows:

The master plan can and should be:

1. Very useful in mobilizing wide public interest and support for education. This mobilization, of course, will require very thorough distribution of the plan or abstracts of it.

2. Helpful in maximizing the limited resources available. It can do this by carefully allocating them to the most important problem areas. It can also do this by minimizing the waste of resources that usually results from scattered efforts, under-financed projects, and poorly integrated activities.

3. Instrumental in broadening the base of school participation. It can synchronize and focus the activities of various educators and special-interest groups in a series of well-times, collaborative efforts.

4. A strategic vehicle for encouraging appropriate short-range planning and providing a practical context within which other sub-units or comparable institutions can plan.

5. Useful in identifying carefully defined requirements in order to obtain the necessary support and commitment for goal attainment.

6. Invaluable in guiding the separate activities of different individuals and groups and in pin-pointing their responsibilities within the total framework of the decision-making and problem-solving process.

V. TRANSITIONAL PLANS: THE INTERIM STEP BETWEEN THE PRESENT AND THE LONG-RANGE GOALS

> Little plans will not solve big problems...and patch-work is no substitute for teamwork.
>
> --United Air Lines

It would be wonderful if all educational agencies, institutions, and organizations in a given school district could be at the same stage of readiness for educational planning. Realistically, however, this condition seldom, if ever, exists. Therefore, long-range plans must be made by those who are ready and able to plan. Developing these long-range plans may encourage others to look ahead and develop their own plans. In some instances, the initial plans may need to be altered from time to time to accommodate conflicting plans generated by other agencies and organizations or to take new direction as research evidence points the way to more desirable solutions to long-term problems.

As long as we live in a free society where a premium is placed on the right of an individual to participate in those decisions which directly affect him, planning efforts will necessarily be incomplete and in need of further development or modification as other individuals and groups become ready to participate. It is this continuous cycle of planning and replanning that represents the dynamic growth processes associated with constant development and accomplishment in American education.

In veiw of the "stop and start" type of planning which is practically forced upon administrators and their governing boards,

it is recommended that the Guam School District assume the responsibility of soliciting a broad, teamwork approach to educational planning on Guam. Developing teamwork in planning is sometimes referred to as the development of planned interdependencies. Developing teamwork is a necessary characteristic associated with educational planning because of the many different individuals and groups involved.

Typically, as plans begin to take form, it becomes increasingly apparent that a wider spectrum of people and their organizations from an even greater geographic area should be involved in the planning. And, for example, unless these persons and groups are involved right from the start, the following will be the likely result. After a readiness for planning is developed, the planning then proceeds. The completed plans, in turn, begin to generate interest on a wider scale. As this interest is reflected in the reactions of other persons and groups to the completed plans, they in turn put pressure upon the original planners to revise their plans. After discussion and debate, sometimes in the public press, the plans are usually revised. This cycle may possible be repeated several times and may extend over a long period of time, unless the teamwork approach has been used. However, the teamwork appearance is not magical. Even with teamwork involved, modifications in the original plans may be both necessary and highly desirable.

VI. THE CONSTANT CHALLENGE IN EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

> Instead of talking about urban renewal, let's talk about human renewal.
>
> --Christian Science Monitor

Excellence in educational planning is achieved only when the plan becomes a human plan. This statement means that the focus of an effective educational plan must be constantly upon the students--the children, youngsters, or adults--to be affected by the plan. Moreover, it means that planning must be recognized as a cooperative effort on the part of many people who in the aggregate exhibit the best of human qualities.

After reviewing a large number of long-range plans for education, it becomes apparent that the technical details, the specific techniques and parameters, are not nearly as important as the cooperation, support, and enthusiasm of those involved in, and affected by, the planning. Appropriate involvement of all concerned, therefore, is imperative. Such involvement provides assurance that sufficient communication has taken place and also provides a way of generating loyalty and commitment to the plans developed.

Different educational planning specialists use different techniques and base their work upon different assumptions. One would therefore expect different recommendations, both as to desirable ends and suitable means, depending upon which specialist directed the planning. Once again, the human dimension of quality planning emphasizes that the specific plan followed--as long as it is basically sound--is not as important as that the specific plan be cooperatively determined and followed with commitment and enthusiasm by those responsible for its execution.